

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1, 3-7, and 9-19 are pending in this application, with Claims 1, 7, 13, 16 and 19 being independent. Claims 2 and 8 have been canceled herein without prejudice.

Claims 1, 7, 13, 16 and 19 have been amended. Applicant submits that support for the amendments can be found in the original disclosure, and therefore no new matter has been added.

Claim 7 has been amended in view of the Examiner's comment. Withdrawal of the objection to that claim is requested.

Claims 1, 5-7, 11-14, 16, 17 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,021,496 to Dutcher. Claims 3, 4, 9, 10, 15 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,021,496 to Dutcher in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0087894 to Foley. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for the reasons discussed below.

As recited in independent Claim 1, the present invention includes, *inter alia*, the features of a registration unit adapted to register, as an effective authentication mechanism, a second authentication mechanism selected from a displayed list, a verification unit adapted to verify that authentication of an object of authentication in the second authentication mechanism succeeds, and an invalidation unit adapted to invalidate a first authentication mechanism if it has been verified by the verification unit that the authentication of the object of authentication in the second authentication mechanism succeeds, and not to invalidate the first authentication mechanism if it has not been verified by the verification unit that the authentication of the object of authentication in the second authentication mechanism succeeds. With these features, if a user attempts to switch to a second authentication mechanism and the switch does not succeed, the first authentication mechanism is not invalidated. This is in contrast to conventional systems where, for example, a user must first log out of one system before attempting to log into a different system. If the login to the second system fails, the user must then re-log into the first system (or, if the user is unable to do so, the user cannot use either the first authentication mechanism or the second mechanism).

Applicant submits that the cited art fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-mentioned features of Claim 1. For example, Applicant submits that in the systems disclosed in *Dutcher* and *Foley*, it is necessary for a user to log out of a first authentication mechanism in order to attempt log-in to a second authentication mechanism. Thus, if a user fails to successfully log in to the second authentication mechanism, the first authentication mechanism has already been invalidated and the user cannot continue using the first authentication mechanism (at least not without logging in again to re-validate the first authentication mechanism). Accordingly, Applicant submits that the cited art fails to disclose or suggest at least the feature of Claim 1 of an invalidation unit adapted to invalidate a first authentication mechanism if it has been verified by a verification unit that authentication of the object of authentication in a second authentication mechanism succeeds, and not to invalidate the first authentication mechanism if it has not been verified by the verification unit that the authentication of the object of authentication in the second authentication mechanism succeeds.

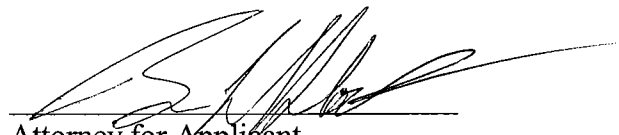
For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that the present invention recited in Claim 1 is patentable over the art of record. The other independent claims recite features similar to those of Claim 1 discussed above, and those other independent claims are believed patentable for reasons similar to Claim 1.

The dependent claim are patentable for reasons similar to the independent claims, as well as for the additional features they recite.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the outstanding objection and rejections, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



Attorney for Applicant
Brian L. Klock
Registration No. 36,570

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200
BLK/lcw

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